

# **Student-Athlete Protection Act**

## **Virginia Department of Education**



# The Code of Virginia

- Directs the Board of Education (BOE) to Develop **Guidelines for Local School Board Policies** dealing with concussions in student-athletes
- Requires **Local School Boards** to develop **Policies and Procedures** regarding **Identification and Handling of suspected Concussions** in student-athletes



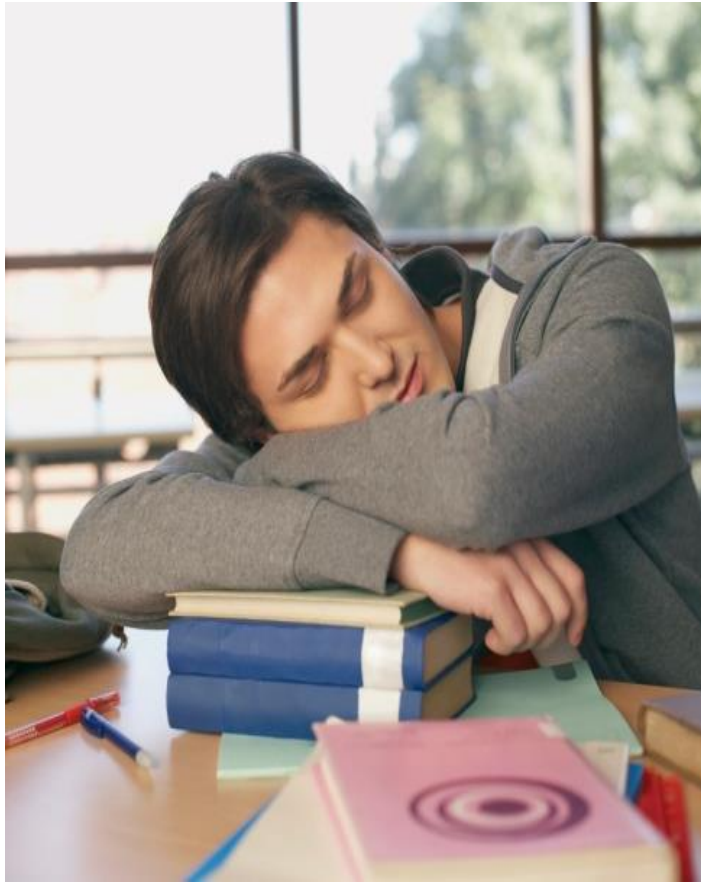


# A Collaborative Process

The VDOE worked with:

- The Virginia High School League, the Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Athletic Trainers Association, Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters, Children's National Medical Center, the Brain Injury Association of Virginia, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Virginia College of Emergency Physicians, and other interested stakeholders

# As a Result of Public Comment in 2011...



Language (not required by the legislation) was added to address the **academic needs and gradual reintroduction of cognitive demands** for students who have **sustained concussions**

# As a result of legislation in 2014

The Board of Education amend its guidelines for school division policies and procedures on concussions in student-athletes to include a "Return to Learn Protocol" and added guidelines for non-interscholastic youth sports programs

# BOE's Definition for Return to Learn



**Return to learn** means academic accommodations that allow for controlled, progressive increase in academic activities while the student recovers from a brain injury that allow the student to participate in classroom activities and learn without worsening symptoms which may delay healing.



# BOE's Definition for Return to Play

Return to play means participate in a nonmedically supervised practice or athletic competition.



# **BOE's Definition of Appropriate Licensed Health Care Provider**



**Physician, Physician Assistant,  
Osteopath or Athletic Trainer** licensed  
by the Board of Medicine  
**Neuropsychologist** licensed by the  
Board of Psychology, or  
**Nurse Practitioner** licensed by the  
Board of Nursing



# Legislation requires



- Student-athletes and parents review information about short- and long-term effects of concussions
- Sign a statement acknowledging receipt, review and understanding of such information
- Local school divisions design the content process and ensure accountability

# The Law also requires



- Immediately remove student athlete when injured
- No participation until asymptomatic during or following periods of supervised exercise that is gradually intensified
- Must receive written medical release from an approved licensed health care provider



# The Law also requires

Student-athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion shall not return to play or academic activities until:

- Evaluated
- Treated
- Receives written clearance from an approved licensed health care provider to return to learn and return to play



# The Law

Schools must review local concussion management policies on an annual basis

At a minimum, the review team must include a:  
school administrator, athletic administrator,  
appropriate health care provider, coach, parent,  
and student

# **BOE Guidelines Require Annual Training for Personnel**



School divisions must develop policies for staff, coaches, athletic trainers, team physicians, and volunteers to receive current training on:

- strategies to reduce concussions
- how to recognize and treat concussions
- when student can safely return to play or academic activities

# **BOE Guidelines Require a Tracking System**

School divisions must maintain a tracking system to document compliance with the annual training requirement





# What Have We Learned?

Effective management is a team effort that includes parents, medical professionals, teachers, coaches and school counselors

- Cannot afford to underestimate academic consequences
- Schools need to be ready and able to accommodate students with concussion

# The key is education...

